

LOVE'S REWARD

NO. 3433

A SERMON
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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him:
I will set him on high, because he hath known my name."
Psalm 91:14*

THAT this psalm was written by David we see no reason to doubt. In the previous verses we have the words of the psalmist himself. Here, however, there is a change of speaker. The promise is spoken by God Himself in these three closing sentences. Doubtless the words of inspired men are very precious as a divine testimony, but when God Himself directly speaks to us in His own name, what an extraordinary weight attaches to every syllable He utters!

Dear child of God, you who are a believer in Jesus, can you not think that you hear your God saying, concerning you, with His own gracious assuring voice, "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him"? And notice that He repeats these words, "I will," four times, as if to give them the most striking emphasis. Surely this is intended to minister some comfort and refreshing to the Lord's people. I pray the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, to give the Word, and to apply it.

"Because," says the Most High, "he hath set his love upon me." We must look at this carefully, for it contains a description of character. If we can find ourselves classified here, it will be well for us, otherwise we shall have reason for deep anxiety. Is our love set upon God? Search your hearts, for the question is very pungent.

The original Hebrew has more force in it than our translation expresses, although I do not know exactly how to improve upon our version. The idea, however, is something like this, "To have fallen in love," as though with all the tenderness of passion, and all the transport of devotion, the creature yearned for his Creator, and mortal man cherished an intense affection for the eternal God.

I. THE HEART'S SUPREME LOVE.

"*He hath set his love upon me.*" His love! Such love as draws the sympathies with its irresistible attraction, as brightens the thoughts with its fervent glow, as knits the heart with its indissoluble bonds, aye, such love as melts the soul with its potent charms. I would have you think of it now as a fact, not as a fiction, or a fancy. That word *love* is translatable into the many tongues of earth, and so it passes current among the million in every age and every clime, but only hearts attuned can feel it, it finds echo only in the purest minds.

But to explain it, why, one had need combine a poet's genius with the emotions of a child, a husband or wife, a parent, a friend, all earthly relations in one to paint genuine love in living language. And even then it were all felt, and little, very little, told. Oh! but this is a high matter, for a man to set his love upon God! *His love*—not a cold sentiment, not a languid approbation, not a mild complacency, not any mere formal respect, but love, burning love, which, like coals of juniper, give forth a vehement flame—"his love set upon God," like a river that is set upon its course to the sea, its volume ever swelling, its tide becoming more and more rapid.

Answer now, dear hearer, can you say that you have set your love upon God? If so, you have been the subject of a *great change*—a mysterious transformation, for your heart was naturally at enmity to God, and the instincts of your mind and the desires of the flesh were alien to Him. Look back, compare your present self with your former self, and consider the difference. If you were not, in your unregenerate state, in active hostility to God, yet were you indifferent towards Him. God was not in all

your thoughts. You could rise at morn, and lay down to rest at night without inquiring after God, you could go forth to your work and labor, and return to seek your recreation without seeking or acknowledging God in all your ways. Fain would you try even to suffer, to die upon the bed of sickness when called to it, struggling with weakness, confiding in the physician's skill, without appealing to God your Creator and your Preserver.

This was your natural state, the bent and bias of your perverse will, and in such waywardness you would have continued to this hour if the free, rich, undeserved, sovereign efficacious grace of God had not interposed. Is your love now set upon God? Then a great change has passed over you, as though a dead man had been quickened into life, as though the darkness of midnight had been suddenly turned to the brightness of midday. A great wonder of grace, a miracle of saving mercy has been wrought in you.

Though you must know to whom it is to be ascribed, let me refresh your memory awhile, that I may awaken your gratitude. Comes not this of the Lord, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working? Depend upon it, only He who made you could new make you. Only that Voice which brought light out of darkness, and order out of chaos, could have dispelled your vain infatuations or inflamed your soul with love, and made your wonted apathy and aversion give place to a sacred ardor and a devout affection.

Surely the kingdom of God has come nigh unto you, salvation has come to your house, the Lord has looked upon you and spoken to you, the Eternal Spirit has brooded over your dull faculties, and as it were, by the breath of God's mouth you have been regenerated, you are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which lives and abides forever.

Henceforth, you are in Christ, a new creature. Revolve these things in your soul, this array of lively blessings, that your gratitude may bloom with joy in God, and your praise to the Lord may burst into melodious song. Do I not speak of a matter which should constrain the tongue of every redeemed man to cry, "Hosanna in the highest"? Were it marvelous if a thousand voices should utter a loud hallelujah?

Your love to God is no self-sown plant. If you have set your love on Him, it is because He first set His love on you. What though your love went spontaneously towards God, without any constraint to violate your will? When He lifted upon you the light of His countenance, and when you did find favor in His eyes, there were charms, attractions, drawings, conformable to the nature of your mind—sweet constraints of divine enchantment—which enamored you of the beauties of Christ, a potent spell of divine persuasion which led you to listen to the voice of Christ, and believe.

And now that you have seen and known Him, you cannot do otherwise than love Him. God has been revealed to you in the person and work of His Son, and your heart has been warmed, your affections have been kindled, your whole soul has been drawn towards Him. So the Lord observes you, and says, "He hath set his love upon me."

Are you the man of whom God speaks? Then I ask you to avow yourself to yourself and to your God, now, in the presence of all His people. "Yes," you can say, "I do love my God, I cannot now live without thoughts of Him, nor do I wish to do so, and when, for a while, through pressure of care, I do not turn my soul towards God, yet, when the pressure is removed, my mind comes back to Him, as the dove flies back to the dovecot, and as the needle trembles back to the pole. Never am I happier than when my thoughts are with my God, nor is there any thought so uppermost in my soul as the thought that He loves me, and that, consequently, I desire to live in obedience to His command, seeking His honor and endeavoring to promote His glory."

I hope, beloved, if the Lord Jesus were to appeal to you, as He did to His servant, Peter, you could stand the threefold interrogation, "Lovest thou me?" And you would answer with Peter at the last, "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Let this love of yours, then, which you possess, be in your soul more and more a consuming flame.

Let nothing come in to quench it, to dim its ardor. Let nothing in your conduct obscure its truthfulness. Suffer no idol to divide the throne which God has claimed in your affections. Cry against the admission of any intruder, beseech the Lord to keep near to you, and to drive far away every

attraction and allurements that would stir up rivalry in your breast. Be it your own strong resolve, in the power of His Spirit, that, as you do love Him, you will seek to love Him more and more, and till your last dying day, it shall be your soul's passion and master thought, that God should be all in all enshrined within the heart as the bosom's Lord. "He hath set his love upon me."

I think I hear some of you say, "Oh! that I *could* love Him! I am half afraid to say that I *do* love Him." Yet perhaps, you are the very persons that, if brought to the test, would prove to be the truest lovers of your Savior. But I hear your inward whisper, "Though I do much that might make me fear and question the sincerity of my love to Him, yet at times, my soul's emotions get the better of these qualms for a while, and speak out their fervor. Yes, my Jesus! I do love You, I do know and feel that You are my portion. Oh! my God, I do desire to love You more, I do give myself up to You."

You know, beloved, that it is not always easy to move the affection of love. It may be in the soul, and lie there quiet. Though I know that I love the Savior, I remember a time when I was in great doubt whether I had any love to Him, till, as I listened to a sermon from a good brother, the truth he uttered so stirred my soul that it set the love that had been slumbering in my spirit all in motion, and I perceived that, after all, I did love my Lord and Master, and had His truth near to my heart.

Now, it may be that God will raise up something in providence, or something in connection with some fellow Christian, that will cause your love to flame up, and you will say within yourself, "There it is, after all! I was afraid it had expired." Do you recollect when you first set your love on God? Do you mind the place where Jesus met with you, where the weight of sin was taken from you, and your transgression like a thick cloud was blown away? Ah! then the Savior was very, very dear to you. You fixed your love on Him.

Do you not remember, since then, many high times and choice occasions when you have renewed your vow, when your soul has stretched out her wings towards Jesus, and He has looked towards you, and you towards Him, and the love of your espousals has been restored? Oh! that it might be so now! But whether or not there be any flames of affection, let the coals burn on, and say within your spirit, "Yes, my Savior, beyond a doubt, I do love You, and I cling to You! Better it were that my heart should cease to pray than cease to love You!"

I am afraid there are some here that neither set their hearts on God, nor care to do so. To them I can only say, God forbid that your present indifference should be your permanent choice. Your resolve not to love the God who made you, not to love the Redeemer of men, the Savior of sinners, the Spirit of grace—such an obstinate resolution as that will involve the loss of all the privileges which belong to the lovers of Christ, and in that day "when the nearer waters roll, when the tempest rages high," you may regret, when it is too late, that you rejected that Jesus who, as Lover of our souls, can alone find us a haven from the storm, and protect us from the wrath to come.

You know, after all, that they are happiest who love God the best. I can only pray for you that His Spirit may teach you wisdom, and lead you to renounce your culpable indifference and your wicked aversion, and draw you into the fellowship of those who have set their love upon God. Now we must pass on. Is our love set?

Then the next thing we have to notice is—

II. GOD'S LOVE PROVED TO THE LOVING HEART.

"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him." Rightly understood, this savors not of human merit, but of divine mercy. The possession of this love reflects no credit on the creature, but the production of it redounds to the praise of the Creator. He that gives grace for grace adds here another golden link to the chain of His own loving-kindnesses when He says, "I will deliver him."

By what gentle ways does a mother fondle her babe, till the wee child clings to her, and to no stranger's arms will it go without a scream. The mother is pleased, she presses the infant to her breast, and she says, "You sweet, affectionate little thing, I will take care of you, nobody shall hurt you."

Even so, beloved, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you," saith the Lord. There is more than a mother's tenderness in our heavenly Father's heart. Come, you children of God,

take this gracious Word from your Father's lips, and let your souls be satisfied with fatness as you feed on it, "I will deliver him." Does it not mean that *He will defend you from all your foes and all your fears*? Are you exposed to ridicule, slander, persecution, tyranny? Or are you teased and tormented with the fawning looks, the treacherous words, the cunning devices, the gaudy allurements of those who would beguile you? Fear not you their faces, whether they frown or smile, cling to your own Protector, for thus says the Lord, "I will deliver you."

Your worst enemies are evil spirits, able to tempt you in many ways, and to suit their devices to your weaknesses, fear them not, for even the prince of the power of the air, though he comes against you with all his fiery darts at once, shall not prevail to destroy you, since it is written, "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him." As you love God, He will certainly deliver you from all the powers of earth and hell.

It may be that your *temporal trials* harass you. Are you poor and friendless, without supplies and without prospects? None know the stings of poverty but those that endure them. It were bootless to fret yourselves for the morrow, while you have enough for today. Take heart, you that love the Lord, and cling closer to Him when the peril seems nearer, for this promise goes before you, "I will deliver him." Aye, doubtless the dinner is ordered when the cupboard is bare, for is it not written, "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time, and in the days of famine they shall be fed"?

Or perhaps, *sickness* has stealthily crept over your mortal frame. Gradually you have been weakened in body. Why should you tremble because of the infirmities of your constitution, or the natural decay that comes with growing years, for you shall be rescued from all the ill-consequences of depression of spirit and of weakness of the flesh, "I will deliver him."

It may be that *bereavement* has deprived your life of its joys. You have been losing friends one by one. Already you have borne to the grave some of the nearest and dearest of your kindred, and others are going. Fear haunts your breast that you will soon be left alone. What will you do when all help has failed, and all light faded from your dwelling? Why, will you not then have this promise to fall back upon?—"Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver Him."

There are no straits or struggles, no cares or crosses, no weary loads or dreary hardships, no privation at present, or famine in prospect, no pains or perils of any kind out of which the all-bounteous God cannot, and will not, deliver His people. Only believe the promise, and you shall find it true, "I will deliver him."

Do you tell me that you are haunted by *strong temptation*, that you have been sorely beset with them of late, that your condition and position are full of danger and jeopardy, that, being tempted by those who have great influence over you, your steps have well-nigh slipped? Go to your knees, cry to your God for strength to endure and might to overcome, but be not dismayed with craven fear, for if you have set your love on God, there stands this record engraved as in eternal brass, "I will deliver him."

You shall have grace equal to your time of trial, you shall break the snares of the foe, though you be shut in like Samson in Gaza, and compassed about on all sides with temptations, you shall wake up as a giant refreshed, and by your strength in God, pluck up the gates of the fortress, and carry them away, post and bar and all, and your soul shall be free.

Peradventure, however, you are the victim of another fear, *you are afraid of dying*. Dying is at no time child's play, and he that treats the matter lightly knows not what he does. But you, perhaps, are subject to bondage through fear of death. Its dread accompaniments, pain of body, gasping for breath, its strange outlook, a vast eternity, its near approach, the rolling up of the curtain that hides from mortal view the scenes that lie beyond—all these appall you.

Oh! be not you troubled in mind. Have you set your love on Jesus and does your heart cling to the Father, God? Then on the bed of languishing you shall find gracious succor and grateful relief. When your heart grows faint and your flesh wastes away, your soul shall be strengthened and your spirit endowed with fresh vigor. The noisome graveyard shall be fragrant with flowers of paradise and the dark sepulcher shall be lighted up with a blessed hope. You shall be gently led, not roughly driven,

through the dark shades. And as with the tender notes of a requiem, sweet though solemn, you shall hear this glad word, "I will deliver him: I will deliver him."

Delivered you shall be. The trial shall issue in triumph. Victim of death, you shall be victor over it. As in a chariot of fire, you shall be borne from the land of gloom to the land of joy. To your Father and your God you shall rise, leading your captivity captive. But ah! this is not a subject to stand and preach about, it is rather one upon which to sit and think, so sit you down, you lover of the Savior, and again, and again, and again delight yourself with this sure word of covenant promise which is given to you for your portion, "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver Him."

III. GOD'S PROMISE TO HIGH KNOWLEDGE.

It is set forth in the latter part of our text, "Because he hath known my name, I will set him on high." This expresses a sacred mystery, "He hath known my name." The Hebrews of old were not accustomed to use the name of JEHOVAH, either in ordinary speech or in their writing. In their sacred books they were commonly in the habit of putting in the word "Adonai," or "Lord," instead of the word "JEHOVAH," the name of their God. To many of the heathen nations the distinctive name of the one God was not even known, they only heard it alluded to by the peculiar people who delighted to keep the name to themselves.

Now there is always a secret about that vital religion which comes to the believer not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost—a secret which the natural man cannot discern. "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." The particular form of expression used in the text arises from the fact that there were some in Israel who did not know the name of God, while others did not know Him as the "I AM," by that superlative name which is His memorial unto all generations. See Exodus 3:13-15. And just so there are today people taught of God, who know the Lord, while the rest of mankind know Him not.

Let us try to give this matter a practical bearing. "He hath known my name." This means *information*. Have you, O my soul, a part in that high privilege of which our Great Intercessor spoke when He said to His Father, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"?

Ask yourself, my hearer, the question, say, Are you initiated into the mystery of that fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, which they enjoy who walk in the light? Do you know the living God? Do you know that He is, and there is none beside Him? Do you know that He is almighty, and therefore bow down before Him? Have you seen that He is merciful, and therefore put your trust in Him? Have you understood that He is just, and therefore do you fear Him? Has your eye ever perceived the blended attributes that make up the crown of deity, and constrain you to worship Him in the beauty of holiness? Can you discern how impartial He is in punishing sin, and yet how gracious in providing a ransom for sinners?

As for the ungodly world, it concerns them not whether there be a God or no, and as to the excellency of His character, they do not regard it, but those whom He loves, and whom He will set on high, delight to know the name of God, and to spell out its mystic letters as they are painted on His works, unfolded in His ways, and revealed in His Word. They make it their study to know what can be known of Him. God is the one object of their life's pursuit. Oh! that I knew where I might find Him! is their instinctive cry. And the Holy Spirit is pleased to help them in their researches. Opinions, conjectures, guesses at truth, count for nothing. Do you know of a surety the name of the Lord, so that without hesitation you can say, "I know whom I have believed"?

"He hath known my name." That means *trust*. He has relied upon it. He has come and depended upon the name of God as his dwelling place, the home of his soul. Wherein is your reliance, O man? On what do you depend for time or eternity? Is it on your own strength, your works, or your merits? Is it on your wit, your wealth, your rank? Ah! then these poor props will fail you ere long. But happy is that man who knows the name of God as his confidence, his refuge, his high tower, his place of defense and security.

To know God's name likewise implies *experience*. I think many of you could rise and say, "Glory be to God, I do know Him by the distresses in which I have called upon Him, and the deliverances He has sent me. In my hours of darkness I have found Him to be a never-failing light. I have gone to His mercy seat in times of need, and then He has appeared to me. I have inquired at His holy oracle, and He has answered me with the Word of His mouth."

Little can anyone know of God who has but heard of Him with the hearing of the ear. Nothing is known of God till we know Him by experience, nothing that is of value. All that the ear learns of God from another's teaching is shallow and superficial. Your heart must know God by its own deep communings.

Let me ask you, dear hearer, how far you have gone in this school of instruction and discipline? We shall ascertain who you are and where you are, by the answer you are able to give to this question. Tens of thousands of men walk through this world and never meet with God, they do not seek Him in their troubles. They may invoke His name, and cry out, "God help me!" in a stress of grief or a paroxysm of pain, but they forget Him when their trials are over.

Oh! how different the children of God! "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." Theirs is not occasional, but habitual drawing nigh unto God. A good minister, sitting one day in the house of one of his people, overheard a dialog with a beggar woman who knocked at the door. The good housewife opened it, and said to the poor creature, "Do not trouble me now, I do not intend to give you anything today."

The reply was, "Please don't say so, ma'am. I am no upstart. You know me very well. I am an old beggar at your door. I should think I have begged of you every week for the last seven years. Do not turn me away, kind lady, I pray you." She was about to be sent off without any relief, when the minister said, "Give her something for my sake. She is the exact picture of me. Her plea with you is just what I am obliged to plead with my God whenever I go to Him. 'Lord, give me thy mercy. I am no new comer, I am an old beggar. I have been dependent upon Thy bounty, a pensioner upon Thy charity, these many, many years. Oh! cast me not away!'"

The Christian's life is a life of dependence upon God. He always has to go to Him. There is never an hour in which he could do without his God. Now this is the man of whom the text speaks, "He hath known my name"—by long experience he has come to rely upon My goodness and My love.

Then, beloved, you will observe the promise that is given to such, "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name." "If He knows My name, I taught it to him, My grace made him know it. And now, having given him so much grace, I will give him more, and I will give him glory at the last, I will set him on high."

What does it mean, to be set on high by God? It certainly implies *rank*. The Christian is a man of rank. How so? Because every man whom God sets on high He owns as His child, makes him to be, "an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ." There is much respect shown in the world to the young man or the young woman whose good fortune it is to be heir of a noble title and large estates, but what must it be to be "an heir of God," to be "a joint-heir with Christ Jesus"?

To be the son of a prince or the son of a king is no small thing in the esteem of most men. To have the blue blood in one's veins is thought to be honorable. To trace your pedigree up to an emperor is a matter for pride.

But the child of God, mean as he may be reckoned on this base earth, though he should have lived and died in an garret or a cellar, near the wind or nigh the damp soil, is a prince of the blood imperial. He is of the royal family of heaven, he shall be a peer, he shall be, ere long, in the court of the Most High. The blood royal runs within his veins, only it is not the royalty of a day, nor does it belong to the crown that is so readily taken from the wearer's brow. The "crown that fadeth not away" belongs to every man who has set his love upon God, and who knows God's name. He is set on high, for God has made him of a princely rank.

The promise to “set him on high” will further mean a place of *security*. The Christian, when his faith is as it should be, is set so high above his enemies that they cannot reach him. We have sometimes been on the top of the Alps, and seen a storm below in the valley. All has been calm over our heads in the sunlight, while below there has been all the tumult of the storm. God sets His servants on high, and often so high that, when others think they will surely disturb their peace and break their comfort, they have been smiling and rejoicing in the clear atmosphere of heaven, undismayed by the tumult that has raged beneath them. “The LORD is my shepherd,” say they, “I shall not want. He prepareth a table for me in the presence of my enemies.”

It must have been a glorious thing for those Frenchmen who went up in one of those balloons that ascended from the besieged city of Paris, to look down on the Prussian soldiers, vainly trying to reach them with their bullets, but they were up too high. It must give one a sense of security to think of the bullets coming halfway up, and then falling short. But such is the position of the Christian by faith. He is on a rock so high that all the gunshots of his enemies cannot reach him. He is perfectly safe while he is near his God. “I will set him on high”—out of harm’s reach—“because he knows my name.” It is rank, and it is safety.

To be set on high, again, means *happiness*. He is the highest man, in some respects, that is the happiest man, for he wears contentment within his bosom. To bear within the soul a pure satisfaction with the divine will, has more to make him wealthy than all the coffers of Croesus. And such is the Christian.

Commend me to the man whose sin is forgiven, to whom a perfect righteousness is imputed, who is adopted into the divine family, from whose past all the blackness is blotted out, whose present is full of content, and whose future is radiant with glory—commend me, I say, to such a man whom nothing can separate from the love of Christ—a man to whom all things belong, whether things present or things to come, a man to whom Christ Himself belongs, and all the treasures of God—and say if such a man be not blessed to all the intents of bliss, where are the blessed ones to be found? If he be not ranked among the happy, and set aloft above all others, where can happiness even be dreamed of?

Verily the true Christian has a portion of happiness allotted to him here below which far excels all the voluptuous pleasures and intoxicating joys of sense. He has a right to be cheerful, a duty to rejoice evermore. The worldling boasts that he is happier than you are, it is a vain boast, an empty vaunt. His mirth—what does it consist of but quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles? His joys—they do but flash, and crack, and sparkle, like thorns that burn for a few minutes, and then turn to ashes.

Their fun will never compare with your felicity. They may have more laughter, but you have more liveliness. They dissipate their spirits, while you renovate your strength. Gloom follows their glee, but your calm eventides forestall bright tomorrows, and your present serenity is the sure presage of a welcome eternity. Then “hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”

“Because he hath known my name, I will set him on high.” Yes, beloved, He has raised us up, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Before long, so short the time with some of us, that it may seem like tomorrow, we shall have our place among the angels. Among the angels did I say? Nearer the throne than they. Where even Gabriel cannot sit, at God’s right hand, by His side who wears our manhood on the throne. There will He set us on high, where sits the Crucified, His hands still bearing the scars, and His feet the nail prints—He will set us there. Do not our hearts leap at the very thought? Worthy to be cast into the lowest pit of hell, and yet infinite mercy promised a seat of honor in heaven!

During the last week two or three venerable brethren, ornaments of our denomination, have passed away—some with whom it has been my habit to take sweet counsel. There was one dear brother, who, last week, was hale and strong, a man who, though his hand were busy and his mind occupied with the cares of this life, delighted to preach the Gospel, and was the pastor of a church. When I heard of his departure, I seemed to realize more vividly how close we are to the world to come.

Very soon, my brethren, you will hear of some in this congregation that have passed the flood. We have dear names in our recollection, the names of those dear to this congregation, whose spirits I could imagine are with us whenever we gather at the communion table. I can, without any immoderate stretch of fancy, picture them often within these aisles. So much did they seem to be part and parcel of ourselves, that when I miss them from their wonted place, I marvel that they shall occupy it no longer.

And ere long some of you also will be missing, the pastor, perhaps, or the deacons, or the elders, or some of you whose old familiar faces greet us constantly. At length you are gone! But oh! what a blessing if gone to swell the number of the glorified, to complete the orchestra of heaven, to add some fresh notes to the everlasting music!

The army there has gaps in its ranks, they, without us, cannot be perfect. We shall soon go over to the majority, we shall soon go from the militant to the triumphant, from those that sit down here and weep over their imperfections, to those who sit up there, see their Lord, and rejoice that they are like Him. Let us anticipate the reunion there, and celebrate the communion here, full of the joys of hope, and the visions of that better land towards which we journey as pilgrims. "Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him"—there is your promise for this life. "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name"—there is your promise of the life to come.

I wish, oh! how I wish, this promise belonged to all of you. Alas! that some of you do not know His name, neither do you set your love upon Him. You must go away without this blessing. Do seek it. Do ask forgiveness at the Savior's feet. God is willing to hear prayer, and when He constrains you to pray, He will surely give the answer. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

ISAIAH 42:1-6

Verse 1. *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.*

Verily this prophecy is concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Observe the title which He takes. He is called the Servant of God. The Father calls Him His servant. Above all others is Christ the servant of the Highest, deigning to become the servant of servants, though He is the King of kings.

"Whom I uphold"—which may be read two ways. According to some renderings, it should be, "Whom I lean upon"—as if God leaned the full weight of His glory upon Christ, and gave over the work of grace into His hands, that is, if the passage be read passively. If actively, it runs as in our text, "Whom I uphold." And both are true. God leans upon Christ. Christ draws His strength from God. They co-work, and mutual is the glory.

"Mine elect." That is, first. "My choice one," for there is none so choice as Christ. "My elected one," for Christ is the Head of election. We are chosen in Him from before the foundation of the world, so that specially does God call Him, "Mine elect."

"In whom my soul delighteth." The delight of the Father in the Son is infinite. He delighted in His person. Now He delights in the work which He has accomplished. The delight of the Father is in Christ, and He delights in us because we are in Him. If, indeed, we are members of Christ, He is well pleased with us for Christ's sake. "In whom my soul delighteth."

"I have put my spirit upon him." That was publicly done when He was baptized in the Jordan. The Spirit without measure rests and abides on Him, our covenant Head.

"He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." Rejoice then, ye Gentiles. You are no longer excluded. At first the Word came to the Jews only, but He has given the man, Christ Jesus, who has brought forth judgment to the Gentiles.

2-3. *He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth.*

Jesus was gentle, retiring, meek, quiet. His testimony was a very powerful one, but not a noisy one. He sought no honor among men. He frequently forbade the healed ones to tell of His miracles. He rather retired than came into public notice. He was not contentious. He did not seek to put out the Pharisees, who were like smoking flax. He was never hard towards the tender ones, but always gentle as a nurse among her children. Now it is very often found that, where there is quietness and meekness, there is, nevertheless, great firmness of purpose. Noise and weakness go together, but quietness and strength are frequently combined. So read the next verse.

4. *He shall not fail—*

He shall not faint. So it may be.

4. *Nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.*

This quiet, gentle Christ goes on pushing on His empire and extending His dominion till these far-off islands of the sea already know His power, and the day comes when the whole round earth shall be obedient to His sway. O blessed Christ, how glad we are to think that, when we are discouraged, You are not, and when we fail and faint, You do not. You hold on forever, like the sun who comes forth from his chamber in the morning, and stops not till he has run his race.

5-6. *Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;*

Thus the great God commissions Christ. Thus He declares that the eternal power and Godhead will back Him up till the Gentiles shall perceive His light, and the people shall be brought into covenant with God.

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.